from the list of essential commodities in the Essential Commodities Act, 1955.

Increase in bilateral trade with China

*390. SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA RAO: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there is a 79 per cent growth in bilateral trade with China in 2004;

(b) if so, whether India has put forward any proposal or *vice-versa* for having a free trade agreement between the two countries; and

(c) how the bilateral talks between India and China help in improving trade between the two countries?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI KAMAL NATH): (a) As per DGCIS provisional data, the India-China trade registered a growth of 47% during 2003-04 as against 2002-03.

(b) As per the Joint Statement released during the visit of Chinese Premier to India, it was agreed to appoint a Joint Task Force to study in detail the feasibility of, and the benefits that may derive from, an India-China Regional Trading Arrangement and give recommendations regarding its content.

(c) Bilateral talks is one of the measures for improving trade, as it helps in discussing and resolving the problems faced by the exporters and importers of both countries.

Adverse effect of alert regarding Tsunami

†*391. SHRI KRIPAL PARMAR: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that after devastating Tsunami waves, survivors in coastal areas showed patience while Central Government's Ministry of Home Affairs and Ministry of Science and Technology flashed alert message again which led to panic among coastal habitants;

(b) if so, what were the reasons therefor; and

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.